



HABITAT HAPPENINGS

A newsletter from the
RUNGE
CONSERVATION
NATURE CENTER

November and December 2002

Hidden Pictures



I love mazes and word searches. I also like hidden picture pages. I remember sitting in the waiting room of my dentist as a youngster and flipping through copies of the magazine, *Highlights for Children*. It always had great hidden picture pages. It was challenging to me to see if I could discover what the artist was trying to hide and how it was hidden. So it is with things in nature. Often they are camouflaged or we just don't look closely enough. With a careful look we may be able to find clues about hidden

animals and their activities. Let's flip through some outdoor scenes and peek at the hidden pictures.

Except for the darting of dragonflies and the buzz of cicadas on a hot summer day, a pond may appear lifeless. Take a closer look. Stare at the water along the edge. Squint through the stems of the tall cattails. Deep two-toed grooves dot the muddy bank. Deer have come down for a drink. Scattered among these deep ruts are small handprints, not unlike a child's. Perhaps it is the hind foot from an opossum visiting the water's edge. Lazy water snakes blend into the mud and shallow

water. Once your eyes adjust to this world, you notice green frogs squatting along the banks like statues in a garden.

Jump into winter! Take a walk down a snowy path where everything is brilliant white and bright. It is easy to see the tracks that abound in the snow. It is not so easy to understand the stories these clues leave of the animal antics that took place when we were nowhere near. Try deciphering the clues. Did the squirrel get away as it circled the tree? What small bird left those delicate markings on the surface of the snow, barely making an impression? Why did the deer trail suddenly disappear? Notice the slide on the hill leading to the icy stream. How many otters "played" there? So much activity in this seemingly still place.

A faint breeze stirs the sea of grass. You are on a prairie and the tallest thing you see is a 7-foot stand of big bluestem grass. In fact, that is all you can see. Once again, look closer. Become part of this landscape and you will discover hidden pictures; pressed grass in an egg shape hints of a deer bedding down for the night, small tunnels woven through the grass indicate a rabbit or mouse run. Soon you will become accustomed to seeing this landscape and will find more clues to more animals and their fascinating hidden lives.

Hidden pictures, hidden stories – if we take the time to look closely we will discover a fascinating new world. When a place appears lifeless or still, just remember to immerse yourself into the scene and soon you will discover an abundance of life. How many pictures will you find? How many stories will you read? I believe the answer is . . . endless. Good luck!

Robin Crabtree, Naturalist

Volunteer News



Volunteer Milestones

Jan Griffin	100 hrs
Karen Libbert	100 hrs
Doris Hessee	300 hrs
Terry Blank	1500 hrs
Clarence Higgins	2500 hrs



Terry Blank



Clarence Higgins



Burma Walther



"Discovering the Rivers of Lewis & Clark" Exhibit

October 14 thru December 14

This national touring exhibit retraces the trail of Lewis and Clark. The exhibit has been split into two parts during its stay in Jefferson City. At the Runge Nature Center, children can climb into a replica of the prow of the explorers' keelboat, surrounded by a mural of the Missouri River as experienced by Lewis and Clark. Visitors to the exhibit at the Kirkpatrick State Information Center, 600 W. Main Street, can experience walking the length of the Lewis & Clark Trail, from St. Louis to the Pacific. You can learn about the new plants and animals that the explorers discovered and how the rivers were harnessed and changed for human use.



The Nature Center will be closed... Noon - 5pm Christmas Eve and Noon - 5pm on New Years Eve.



Thank You

Scholastic Inc. and Nuway Rentals for your support during our Haunted Habitats event.



Please help us to better serve **YOU!** If you sign up for a program offered by the nature center and are unable to attend, please contact the nature center to remove your name from the attendance list. Many of our programs have a waiting list so your call could mean that someone else gets to enjoy our offering.



Exhibits for November December

Outdoor Writers' Association of America, Inc.

2002-03 Traveling Photo Exhibit

The exhibit includes 30 award-winning color and black-and-white photos that allow the viewer to experience nature. Five categories of excellent photos are represented: scenic, flora, people, action, and fauna.

Events for... **November**

Registration for all programs begins on November 1st. Call 573/526-5544 to make your reservation.

9 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

8 AM-5:30 PM -- 18 Years and older

See splendid sights! Learn about our wondrous state! Come join novice and experienced day hikers alike as we strap on our boots and go! Each month, we'll meet at the nature center, car pool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots, and hike one or two of the best trails. A volunteer naturalist will lead the hikes and point out highlights as we go.

One hundred and fifty years ago, much of west-central Missouri was either prairie or savanna. Displays in the visitor center at **Knob Noster State Park** explain the role savannas played in Missouri's history and describe the park's progress in restoring these amazing natural communities. We'll stop at the visitor center at Knob Noster and hike the **Hawk Nest and Clearfork Savanna Trails** (2.5 miles.) After lunch, we may hike all or part of the **Discovery and North Loop Trails** (2.75 miles.) Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

10 Sunday

Book Signing - Lewis & Clark In Missouri

2 PM -- Families

With the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition quickly approaching, you will want to have the latest and most interesting information available to you. Ann Rogers has put it all together in a new edition of her popular book, *Lewis & Clark In Missouri*. She will be at the nature center this afternoon to personalize your copy and will speak briefly about her research. The book will be for sale in our gift shop. No reservations required.

14 Thursday

Bird-brained Projects

7 PM -- Families

There are a myriad of woodworking projects that benefit birds! Kathy Cavender, naturalist, will spend this evening explaining a variety of birdhouses and feeders. Each family unit will have an opportunity to make a feeder of their own. Program sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. Reservations required.

Check It Out!

From crayons and glue to tracks and treks, there's something new and exciting every weekend at Runge. You don't need to call—just stop by between 10 AM and Noon on Saturdays or from 1 to 3 PM on Sundays. It is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

16 Saturday

Create a Bird-Watcher's Journal

9 AM -- Families (children accompanied by an adult)

Join us as we watch Runge's bird feeding stations to sketch and write about what we see. Putting your impressions about birds on paper is a great way to begin a nature journal, or add to the one you started. Naturalists who know birds and understand journaling will guide you through this delightful pastime. Reservations required.

21 Thursday

Wildlifers—Quilt Block

10-11:30 AM, 1-2:30 PM, 3:30-5 PM, and 6-7:30 PM -- 50+ Years

Wild turkeys were found in abundance in wooded areas of Missouri and provided the Lewis and Clark expedition with meat. Reserve your space to make a quilt block of this Gobbler! Reservations required.

The Runge Reading Guild - Discover Nature Through Reading

22nd Friday

6:30 - 8 PM -- Families with children 12 years and up

Sacajawea By Joseph Bruchac

With the bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark expedition rapidly approaching, people of all ages are becoming more interested in the many aspects of this monumental journey. The expedition gave America invaluable natural and cultural information, but the people involved had their own stories. In the novel, *Sacajawea*, by Joseph Bruchac, the reader hears the fascinating story of the expedition in Sacajawea's voice alternating with Captain Clark. Sacajawea was the only female, only native American, and only mother to journey with Lewis and Clark from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. She is an unbelievable character, but definitely very real. Joseph Bruchac brings history and the people to life and invites the reader to join this fascinating exploration. Reservations required.

This book is published by Scholastic Inc. and is recommended reading for ages 12 and up.

The **Babes in the Woods** program is taking time off. We will return in the spring with fresh new programs for the youngest among us. Watch for those dates in the March/April *Habitat Happenings*.

29 Friday

Book Signing

Outside Jokes—Cartoons about Nature and the Outdoors

11 AM - 2 PM -- Families

Just in time for holiday gift-giving, Betty Chmielniak Grace, cartoonist for the *Missouri Conservationist* magazine, has published a new book. Betty will present a short program at 11 AM about her career and will be available afterwards to sign books. Bring your copy or purchase one at the nature center. No reservations required.

Decorating Naturally

10 AM and 3 PM -- Adults only

What a perfect time to create a wreath using material nature has provided us. Come and learn about the wild plants you'll use to make your own fall wreath. Bring one SMALL (12") grapevine wreath, glue gun and sticks, and pruning shears; we will supply all of the natural materials. Reservations required.

Snakes Alive

1 PM -- Families

Why is that snake sticking its tongue out? What should you do when you see a snake in your yard? You will discover fact and fable about Missouri snakes this afternoon and will even have a chance to meet a live one. No reservations required.

For the little ones...

Turkey Talk



A turkey is a very funny bird, his head goes wobble, wobble, wobble. But the one good thing a

turkey says is gobble, gobble, gobble!

This month we will walk, talk, and learn ALL about turkeys! Join us! Reservations required.

Little Acorns 3-6 years of age

Thursday, November 7 – 2 PM

Tuesday, November 12 – 6 PM

Friday, November 15 – 10 AM

Saturday, November 16 – 1 PM

Thursday, November 21 – 10 AM

Tuesday, November 26 – 10 AM

Events for... **December**

Registration for all programs begins on November 1st. Call 573/526-5544 to make your reservation.

6 Friday

Owl Prowls

7 PM -- Families

Join us as we unwrap the mysteries of Missouri's owls. We will take a short walk on a nature center trail and see if we can spot an owl. Dress for the weather. Reservations required.

8 Sunday

Call of the Wild

2 PM -- Families

Experience the thrills and sometimes chills of the unique animal calling talent of Ralph Duren. Ralph will demonstrate his ability to imitate the sounds and calls of more than 70 different animal species, all of them using his natural voice! Reservations required.

12 Thursday

Concert in Nature

7 PM -- Adults

Relax and get back to nature with Emmy nominated songwriter Jan Syrigos and



her husband George. Weaving guitar, piano, vocals, and visuals they'll soothe you with a tapestry of natural songs. Join us for the debut of some of their new

creations. Program sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. No reservations required.

13 Friday

Owl Prowls

7 PM -- Families

Refer to December 6 for description.

14 Saturday

The Runge Hiking Club

8 AM-3 PM -- 18 Years and older

Most springs in Missouri have an obvious, single outlet, but Lane Spring is unusual. Each day, eleven million gallons of water erupt from dozens of underwater "boils." We'll visit **Lane Spring Recreation Area** near Rolla, and hike two trails there—the **Blossom Rock Trail** (1 mile) and the **Cedar Bluff Trail** (1 mile.) Hike on ridgetop glades, where pine trees grow among the chinkapin oaks. Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

19 Thursday

Wildlifers—Quilt Block

10-11:30 AM, 1-2:30 PM, 3:30-5 PM, and 6-7:30 PM -- 50+ Years

The wild rose was one of the many flowers in Missouri seen by Lewis and Clark on their expedition. Join us this month and complete your last block of this series. Reservations required.

27 Friday

Fireside Stories

2 PM -- Families

Join us by the cozy fireplace and listen to wonderful nature tales. No reservations required.

The Runge Reading Guild- Discover Nature Through Reading

27th Friday

6:30 - 8 PM -- Adults Only

*Again rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.*

Robert Burns (1759-1796) Scottish poet

So much is expressed with a few well chosen words. Prose and poetry speak to us in soft and subtle ways. Mid-winter seems like an appropriate time for gentle reflection. You are invited to the nature center in December to share your favorite short prose or poetry as it relates to our outdoor world. Reservations required.

For the little ones...

Animal Clues



I spy a raccoon or is it an opossum? How can you tell? This month we will learn about various clues that help us find out what animal was here. Come and be a nature detective with us. Reservations required.

Little Acorns 3-6 years of age

Saturday, December 7 – 11 AM
Thursday, December 12 – 10 AM
Friday, December 13 – 10 AM
Tuesday, December 17 – 6 PM
Wednesday, December 18 – 2 PM

Check It Out!

From crayons and glue to tracks and treks, there's something new and exciting every weekend at Runge. You don't need to call—just stop by between 10 AM and Noon on Saturdays or from 1 to 3 PM on Sundays. It is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

28 Saturday

Where Do You Go When It Feels Like Snow? 11 AM -- Families

If the weather has you down or if you need to get rid of winter blues, come out to the nature center. Our puppets and their puppeteers have the right prescription for you. Enjoy some sunshine and become re-energized. No reservations required.

Otter Mania 1 PM -- Families

Join Glenn Chambers and his live river otters for a program that explains otter life history and the successful restoration project. Reservations required.

29 Sunday

Dulcimer Music

2 PM -- Families

Runge volunteer naturalist, Paul Harvey, brings his mountain dulcimer to the nature center for some "Sweet Songs from Missouri's Woodlands." No reservations required.

Fireside Stories

4 PM -- Families

Enjoy a variety of nature tales by our cozy fireplace. No reservations required.





Conservation Kids' Club

Welcome to Conservation Kids' Club, a fun club created for kids 6-13 years old who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife. Come to one of these meetings and we'll sign you up.

Beast Bop-A-Loo-Bop

Tuesday, November 19, 2002

6:00 PM - 7:15 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6-8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9-13) combine for this meeting.

Play Pretty Productions presents live music and awesome storytelling with Sarah and Thom Howard! Come along on a jamming journey filled with critters, crawlers, and creatures. Thom will serve up a generous helping of delicious guitar playing, while Sarah cooks up some unforgettable animal tales, strumming her mandolin and autoharp. You don't want to miss this!

Christmas is for the Birds

Tuesday, December 10, 2002

7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6-8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9-13) combine for this meeting.



*Trim the tree to celebrate
For Christmas, have you heard?
Don't forget to decorate
A present for the BIRDS!*

Celebrate the wild world of winter birds at our December Kids' Club meeting. Build your own simple bird feeder and take home treats for a backyard birdie feast. Don't let this meeting fly by you!

Eagle Watch Field Trip

Saturday, January 4, 2003

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Pollywogs (Ages 6-8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9-13) combine for this meeting.

Watch your Conservation Kids' Club newsletter for details. You must be an official Kids' Club member to attend the field trip. New members must join by November 19, 2002 in order to qualify for the trip.

Hey Parents!

While big brother/sister attend Conservation Kids' Club, your pre-schooler can be involved in a Little Acorns program (3-6 years of age) at the same time!

Scouts...

Call November 1st to make your reservation. These programs are for scout groups with 10 or fewer members in their group. If you have over 10, contact the nature center to schedule your group to receive a program of your own.

Watching Wildlife Try-It - Brownies

Wednesday, November 6 - 6:30 PM

Naturalist - Bear Cub Scouts

Wednesday, November 13 - 6:30 PM

Animal Try-It - Brownies

Wednesday, November 20 - 6:30 PM

Bear Achievement #5 - Bear Cub Scouts

Wednesday, December 4 - 6:30 PM

Eco-Explorer - Brownies

Wednesday, December 11 - 6:30 PM



Scout Packs Available

Just a reminder . . . scout leaders can check out packs from the Runge Conservation Nature Center to help their groups with outdoor skills. Contact: Andrea Putnam 573/526-5544.



How many did you find? Take a closer look. There are at least 39 animals or tracks in this issue of *Habitat Happenings*.

Little Acorns Program

3-6 years of age

November 19 ~ 6 PM

Music and Stories

Our Little Acorn group will meet this month for a brief introduction to music and stories as a preparation for attending Beast Bop-A-Loo-Bop with the Conservation Kids' Club. This is a special opportunity for Little Acorns.

December 10 ~ 6 PM

Animal Clues

I spy a raccoon or is it an opossum? How can you tell? This month we will learn about various clues that help us find out what animal was here. Come and be a nature detective with us.





2003 Eagle Days



January 4 9am-4pm

January 5 10am-4pm

Willmore Lodge~Lake Ozark

Sponsored by the Runge Conservation Nature Center
and the Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

Live eagles from World Bird Sanctuary at
Willmore Lodge.

Wild eagle viewing sites with high-power scopes
at the Bagnell Dam access and on the deck of
the Willmore Lodge. Dress warmly.

Eagle watch cruises (30 min.) on the Paddle
Wheeler *Tom Sawyer* on January 4 only
(conditions permitting.) Cost \$4 per person.
Tickets may be purchased prior to departure
of the cruises on January 4.

Souvenirs will be for sale in Willmore Lodge.

Runge Conservation Nature Center is located in western Jefferson City. From U.S. 50, exit on Highway 179. Travel north on 179 for 1/4 mile to the Nature Center entrance on the left. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8 AM to 5 PM and Noon to 5 PM on Sundays. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. No admission fee. PHONE: 573/526-5544 FAX: 573/526-4496 <<http://www.conservation.state.mo.us>>

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